

Evolution 4510/5450 - Spring 2015

Essay Assignment

Instructions

Your understanding of the course material will also be evaluated in the form of a term paper. We anticipate that your independent research in an area of choice will enable you to compose an original, concise, and well-reasoned analysis of approximately 8-10 pages (double-spaced, excluding bibliography, tables; size 12 font, 2.5 cm margins).

You require a minimum of *8-10 references from the peer-reviewed primary literature* i.e. no Scientific American articles, Internet sites, old book reports by your roommate etc. No more than two peer-reviewed book chapters may be cited. References are to be cited in the text, alphabetically by author and date. A small set of standard formats is used for references in scientific journals. References for journals and books should be in the following style:

MacDonald, G. M., Steenhuis, J. J., and Barry, B. A. (1995) Notes on Zoonoses. *J. Zool.* 270, 8420-8428

Sambrook, J., Fritsch, E. F., and Maniatis, T. (1989) *Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual*, 2nd Ed., Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, Cold Spring Harbor, NY

To write a review of a subject be specific - good reviews always examine a relatively narrow topic. To review a group of papers in one area e.g. sympatric speciation, the origin of sex, the origin of life, explain what question you have posed. Why is the question interesting? What is the context for your question? What are the main issues that are currently being tackled in the literature? Evaluate the papers as a group. Is there consensus, or dissent, or just no cohesion in the field? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the different approaches that have been taken? Conclude by summarizing your findings. What progress has been made in tackling your question? What still needs to be learned? What direction should this field take in the future?

Writing Aids

You should all have a copy of "*The Scott, Foresman Handbook for Writers*" from previous English classes. Be sure to use it! It is also available online at the BGSU Libraries and Learning Resources site (<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/library/>). You may seek help at the BGSU Writing Lab. See their online help at <http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/writing-lab/about.html> for information on the services available.

Grading

This paper will be graded for writing style (40%), and content and logical consistency (60%), following the attached rubric. The final version of your paper is due on or before **Thursday 23rd April**.

Topic

Pick your favorite evolutionary topic. You *must* clear your selected topic with me, in person or via email, before **31st March**.